

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 AID-20 SCA-01 VO-03

EUR-25 EA-11 DRC-01 /179 W
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R 222121Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7557

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0877

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, SREF

SUBJ: REFUGEE AFFAIRS

REF: SANTIAGO 488

1. SUMMARY. NEARLY ALL REFUGEES SEEKING TO LEAVE CHILE HAVE BEEN RELOCATED. THOUGH HEAVY WORKLOAD DIMINISHING, UNHCR PLANS TO KEEP SANTIAGO OFFICE STAFFED. ALL PARTIES INVOLVED IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM INCLUDING GOC HAVE PERFORMED WELL. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO UNHCR OFFICIAL ALL BUT 70 OF APPROXIMATELY 2200 HIGH PRIORITY CASES ON ITS REFUGEE ROLLS (E.G. THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS AND DEPENDENTS) HAVE FOUND RELOCATION OPPORTUNITES OUTSIDE OF CHILE. REMAINING 70 ARE BASICALLY LAST OF LOT WELL PICKED OVER BY RECEIVING COUNTRIES. UNHCR HOPEFUL THAT ALL WILL EVENTUALLY BE TAKEN BY NATIONS STILL SELECTING. SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF REFUGEES REMAIN IN CHILE WAITING AIR TRANSPORTATION OUT OF COUNTRY. ONLY ONE OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AID TO REFUGEES SAFEHAVENS REMAIN OPEN, AND THE COMMITTEE ITSELF HAS OFFICIALLY CLOSED SHOP THOUGH ACTUALLY IT CONTINUES
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TO OPERATE AND WILL BE RECHRISTENED SHORTLY.

3. CONTINUING PROBLEM FOR UNHCR WILL BE APPROXIMATELY 300 EASTERN EUROPEAN REFUGEES, MANY OF WHOM CHILEAN RESIDENTS FOR 20 YEARS OR MORE AND WHO NOW WISH TO EMIGRATE FOR ECONOMIC RATHER THAN POLITICAL REASONS. MOST COUNTRIES, INCLUDING US, HAVE NOT ACCEPTED SUCH INDIVIDUALS ON BASIS THEIR DESIRE TO LEAVE CHILE NOT BASED ON WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTION. UNHCR PLANS TO ASSIST SOME IN NORMAL IMMIGRATION PROCESSES FOR CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES AND TO INCREASE IN-COUNTRY ASSISTANCE (E.G. PENSIONS, OLD-AGE HOMES) TO OTHERS. UNHCR PLANS TO MAINTAIN WELL-STAFFED SANTIAGO OFFICE TO DEAL WITH EASTERN EUROPEANS AS WELL WITH VARIETY OF PROBLEMS LARGELY RELATING TO REUNIFYING FAMILIES DIVIDED BY RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS. UNHCR ALSO PREPARED TO ASSIST THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS WHO HAVE NOT YET ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE AND/OR WHO HAVE REMAINED UNDERGROUND FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER. POST ESTIMATES THAT NUMBER IN LATTER GROUP PROBABLY RELATIVELY LIMITED.

4. NOW THAT ONLY LOOSE ENDS REMAIN, A BIT OF REFLECTION MAY BE IN ORDER. POST'S OPINION IS THAT ALL GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE REFUGEE OPERATION, INCLUDING THE GOC, HAVE ACQUITTED THEMSELVES WELL. UNHCR, ICEM, AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE WORKED WELL TOGETHHER THOUGH THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WERE NOT WITHOUT FRICTION. ICEM AND UNHCR OFFICIALS WERE AT TIMES MUTUALLY MIFFED OVER WHAT THEY INTERPRETED TO BE THE OTHER ORGANIZATION'S OVERSTEPPING OF FUNCTIONAL BOUNDARIES, AND BOTH GROUPS OCCASIONALLY FOUND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE "TOO AMATEURISH." POLITICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE'S EXECUTIVE SECRETARY NALEGACH, A CHILEAN PENTECOSTAL MINISTER WITH A DECIDED PRO-JUNTA BIAS, AND SOME OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS WHO TEND TO VIEW THE JUNTA IN A MORE CRITICAL LIGHT, NEVER WERE ALLOWED TO GET OUT OF HAND OR INTERFERE WITH THE REFUGEE PROCESS. AFTER SOME INITIAL LACK OF DIRECTION THE GOC APPARENTLY COOPERATED QUITE FULLY WITH THE REFUGEE EFFORT. THOUGH IT RESERVED FOR ITSELF THE RIGHT TO ENTER THE SAFEHAVENS AND ARREST INDIVIDUALS, IT NEVER DID SO. ON ONE OCCASION AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAD BEEN GRANTED A SAFECONDUCT WAS ARRESTED IN THE AIRPORT AS HE ATTEMPTED TO BOARD A PLANE; HOWEVER, AFTER BEING DETAINED FOR SOME MONTHS, HE WAS RELEASED. THE CHIEF LAWYER OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS CONFIRMED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBOFF THAT GOC HAS TURNED BLIND EYE TOWARDS REFUGEES WHO COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN DETAINED AND/OR BROUGHT TO TRIAL. ONLY A HANDFUL OF REFUGEES WHO REGISTERED WITH NATIONAL COMMITTEE MUST REMAIN IN CHILE PENDING JUDICIAL PROCEDURES. IN SUM GOC HAS ACTED IN A GENERALLY RESPONSIBLE MANNER IN THE MULTINATIONAL EFFORT TO ASSIST REFUGEES.
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